SITUATION REPORT:
BEIRUT EXPLOSION
August 17, 2020 | No. 4

**SITUATION OVERVIEW**
In the early evening of Aug. 4, explosions occurred in the Port of Beirut, Lebanon, suspected to be the result of ammonium nitrate catching fire. The ensuing explosions engulfed the entire port area adjacent to the downtown core of Beirut, damaging residences and businesses, and also affecting many hospitals, already overwhelmed, struggling in the coronavirus pandemic.

The unexpected explosion and coronavirus pandemic exacerbate underlying issues from the recent past, including an unstable political climate and record inflation.

About half of the country is unemployed and dependent on food assistance. The port of Beirut is currently unusable, and the national food stock is reportedly low. Concerns of food security grow. Supply chains remain open through Tripoli to the north, but this blow to infrastructure limits access to critical markets for those most affected by the explosion. The Prime Minister and his administration have resigned yesterday amidst outcry and protests over their preemptive decisions and response to the explosion. The outlook for Lebanon is dire if coordinated action is not undertaken now.

**ACTIONS TAKEN AND NEXT STEPS**
Corus International joins the humanitarian community and government efforts in mobilizing to respond. Debris removal and low impacted housing rehabilitation remains the primary focus for the area. Response team personnel are on the ground coordinating with partner responders and have identified critical needs and planned Corus’ response activities. With available information from partners and leveraging Corus’ history of supporting locally-drive emergency responses, staff are focusing on shelter, food security, and health needs. To meet the need, Corus is working to mobilize financial and material resources from the existing stock.

**BY THE NUMBERS**
178 **CONFIRMED DEATHS**
6,000+ **CONFIRMED INJURED**
300,000 **ESTIMATED DISPLACED**

*Source: Al Jazeera, Beirut Explosion Live Updates, 8/13/2020*

Lutheran World Relief works in concert with Corus International, a family of faith-based organizations delivering holistic, lasting solutions to the interconnected challenges of poverty, health care access and climate change.